

Right Relationship Concept: Know the Rules (Primary)

Learning Objectives:

- To introduce students to a particular classroom setting, to the catechist, and to each other.
- To build understanding that good rules protect them, facilitate positive social interactions, and are a natural part of growth in the Kingdom of God.
- To establish classroom rules and to review basic rules for “right” relationships.
- To encourage communication with trusted adults when the students feel rules are being violated.

Outline:

- I. Introductions
- II. Opening Prayer
- III. Why Do We Have Rules?
- IV. What Are God’s Rules / the Rules of God’s Church?
- V. Establishment of Classroom Rules
- VI. Remembering the Rules
- VII. The Rules for Right Relationships (Core)**
- VIII. Closing Prayer

Materials Needed:

- Whiteboard, chalkboard and chalk or flip chart and markers
- Pens, pencils for class members
- Handouts:
 - PreK – 12: “Rules for Our Class”
 - PreK – 3: “The Ten Commandments” and “The Tablets”
 - PreK – 3: ‘No-Go-Tell’ Bookmark
- Activities:
 - “Rules for Our Class”: poster-board, crayons, markers, colored pencils, pictures, scissors, glue
 - “The Ten Commandments”: pens or pencils, scissors, glue
 - “The Tablets”: pens or pencils
 - ‘No-Go-Tell’ Bookmark: no special materials needed

I. Introductions

- Prepare a nametag for each student. Welcome each child to the classroom. Introduce yourself. Write your name on the board. For older students, introduce the regular curriculum theme for the year / semester when applicable. Hand out the name tags and help each child with an introduction to the rest of the class.

II. Opening Prayer

In the + Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Dear God, thank you for gathering us together as we begin a new year of (Religious) education. Please be with us as we get to know each other and plan our year together. Help us to listen and share in our discussion today and throughout the year as we grow in community with one another and you.

In the + Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

III. Why Do We Have Rules?

Discussion

- Pose an open-ended question: “*Why do we have rules?*” Write responses on the chalkboard / flipchart. Children often respond: “*so things are fair; so no one gets hurt; to keep everyone safe; to help everyone get along; to create a good place to learn;*” etc. If no one identifies safety, positive learning environment, helping people get along, in some form, be sure to add them.

IV. What Are God’s Rules / The Rules of God’s Church?

Activity

- Invite students to name some of God’s rules. Hand out “The Ten Commandments” and “The Tablets.” Have the students cut out the Commandments and paste them to the tablets.
- For older grade levels, you may want to hand out “The Tablets” to see who can list the most commandments in order before handing out “The Ten Commandments.”

V. Establishment of Classroom Rules

Discussion

- **Ask:** “What rules do you have at school or at home?” Record the answers on the board. **Say:** “We need to set some rules for this class for many of the reasons you identified earlier (e.g. to keep everyone safe; to help us get along; to treat each other with respect; to help everyone feel accepted and welcome; to create an environment where we can learn; to help us follow Jesus’ example, etc.). Point to rules written on the board and **ask:** “Which of these rules do you think we should use in our classroom?” and “What other rules do you think we need?” Circle from or add to the previous list. Most rules fall under a few categories that can be objectified with specific examples:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Example</u>
Physical acting out	Keep your hands and feet to yourself. Respect each other’s personal space.
Appropriate language	No name-calling or using language that is offensive.
Good learning environment	Listen. Take turns. Raise your hand. Be attentive.

- Often it is possible to re-group and re-phrase the rules identified by your class to resemble the general rules of your program, etc. This useful activity helps the students better understand the general rules and helps them feel connected as they see that the rules identified by the adult authorities are the same rules they identified as a class. As you summarize the rules for the class, write them on a poster-board that will remain in the classroom throughout the year.

Activity

PreK – 3: “Rules for Our Class”

- In this activity, students make their own lists of the classroom rules and draw or cut out pictures to illustrate an example of each. This is an important activity as it increases retention of the rules as well as providing “take home” information to share with parents.

VI. Remembering the Rules

Discussion

- After establishing classroom rules, it is important to identify how your students will remember the rules and be motivated to follow them. Classroom discussion may help you arrive at a strategy for implementing rules in your classroom.
- **Ask:** “*What helps you remember rules? What happens if you don’t follow the rules at school? At home?*” Encourage students to brainstorm ways to remember the rules and record their responses. If no one identifies “consequences” as a motivation/reminder for following rules, **Say:** “*We sometimes need to experience consequences to remember to follow the rules.*” Look at the responses the students have provided and try to re-define them in terms of a consequence for your school/religious education program. Be sure students understand that a consequence is something that happens because they make a choice and act on that choice.
- Implement other strategies to help students remember the rules, e.g., post them in the room, give a warning, review rules before each class, provide reinforcement for following rules consistently, etc. Use the discipline policy set up by the school or religious education program.

VII. The Rules for Right Relationships (Core)

Discussion

- After identifying the rules for students in the class, let the students know that all behavior is governed by rules.
- Adults and parents who interact with children are accountable for behaving correctly and appropriately toward them. Although it is not possible to delineate all specific behaviors, the “No-Go-Tell Rule” lets young children understand that they are created in God’s image and God does not want any one to hurt them. Hand out the “No-Go-Tell Rule” Bookmarks, then read and explain the “No-Go-Tell Rule” using the following guidelines.
- Basic Guidelines:
 - God loves you.
 - God made you. You are the only “you” God created. There never has been nor will there ever be another person exactly like you.
 - God never wants anyone to hurt you.
 - No one has the right to hurt you.

You do not have the right to hurt anyone else.

- **The “No-Go-Tell Rule”:**

For **No, Say:** *“If anyone makes you feel weird, uncomfortable, worried, or scared, you have the **RIGHT** to tell them to **STOP**. **Ask:** “What are some ways you might tell someone to stop?” Appropriate responses include words such as “**Stop it!**”, “**I don’t like that!**”, “**Quit it!**”, “**Don’t do that to me!**”, or “**I’ll yell if you don’t stop!**”*

For **Go, Say:** *“If anyone makes you feel weird, uncomfortable, worried, or scared, you have to get away from that person and be safe.” **Ask:** “Where might you go to feel safe?” Appropriate responses include “to a room with other people”, “home”, “to another adult I trust.”*

For **Tell, Say:** *“Tell an adult you trust and continue telling adults you trust what happened until they understand how you feel and do something to make you feel safe.”*

- **Say:** *“God loves you and wants you to be happy. He does not want you to feel weird, uncomfortable, worried, or scared. Use this bookmark as a reminder of what to do if someone ever makes you feel weird, uncomfortable, worried, or scared.”*

VIII. Closing Prayer

In the + Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Lord Jesus, thank you for loving us, for creating us, and wanting us to be happy and safe. Thank you for giving us rules to help us know how to behave and treat each other with respect and love. Please help us to follow our classroom rules so we all have the opportunity to learn more about you and our Catholic faith. Give us courage to share our feelings and ask for help when we need it.

In the + Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.